

Thomas Jefferson to Levi Lincoln, August 26, 1801, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL J. MSS. (LEVI LINCOLN)

Monticello, Aug. 26, 1801.

Dear Sir, — * * * I am glad to learn from you that the answer to NewHaven had a good effect in Massachusetts on the republicans, & no ill effects on the sincere federalists. I had foreseen, years ago, that the first republican President who should come into office after all the places in the government had become exclusively occupied by federalists, would have a dreadful operation to perform. That the republicans would consent to a continuation of everything in federal hands, was not to be expected, because neither just nor politic. On him, then, was to devolve the office of an executioner, that of lopping off. I cannot say that it has worked harder than I expected. You know the moderation of our views in this business, and that we all concurred in

them. We determined to proceed with deliberation. This produced impatience in the republicans, and a belief we meant to do nothing. Some occasion of public explanation was eagerly desired, when the NewHaven remonstrance offered us that occasion. The answer was meant as an explanation to our friends. It has had on them, everywhere, the most wholesome effect. Appearances of schismatizing from us have been entirely done away. I own I expected it would check the current with which the republican federalists were returning to their brethren, the republicans. I extremely lamented this effect; for the moment which should convince me that a healing of the nation into one is impracticable, would be the last moment of my wishing to remain where I am. (Of the monarchical federalists I have no expectations. They are incurables, to be taken care of in a mad

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house, if necessary, & on motives of charity.) I am much pleased, therefore, with your information that the republican federalists are still coming in to the desired union. The Eastern newspapers had given me a different impression, because I supposed the printers knew the taste of their customers, and cooked their dishes to their palates. The *Palladium* is understood to be the *clerical* paper, & from the clergy I expect no mercy. They crucified their Saviour, who preached that their kingdom was not of this world; and all who practise on that precept must expect the extreme of their wrath. The laws of the present day withhold their hands from blood; but lies and slander still remain to them.

I am satisfied that the heaping of abuse on me, personally, has been with the design & hope of provoking me to make a general sweep of all federalists out of office. But as I have carried no passion into the execution of this disagreeable duty, I shall suffer none to be excited. The clamor which has been raised

will not provoke me to remove one more, nor deter me from removing one less, than if not a word had been said on the subject. In Massachusetts, you may be assured, great moderation will be used. Indeed, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania & Delaware, are the only States where anything considerable is desired. In the course of the summer all which is necessary will be done; and we may hope that this cause of offence being at an end, the measures we shall pursue & propose for the amelioration of the public affairs will be so confessedly salutary as to unite all men not monarchists in principle.

We have considerable hopes of republican senators from S. Carolina, Maryland & Delaware, & some as to Vermont. In any event, we are secure of a majority in the Senate; and consequently that there will be a concert of action between the Legislature & executive. The removal of excrescences from the judiciary is the universal demand. We propose to re-assemble at Washington on the last day of September. Accept assurances of my affectionate esteem & high respect.